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May 6, 2003

Mary Cottrell, Secretary
Department of Telecommunications and Energy
One South Station
Boston, Mass. 02110

RE: Boston Gas Co. dba KeySpan Energy Delivery New England, DTE 03-40

Dear Secretary Cottrell:

This letter is filed on behalf of the Massachusetts Community Action Program Directors Association Inc. (MASSCAP), including their member agencies. It requests that MASSCAP be granted intervenor status in the above-captioned docket, in which Boston Gas Co. dba KeySpan Energy Delivery New England (the Company) proposes a general increase in gas rates.

G.L. c. 25, sec. 19 (St. 1997, c. 164, sec. 37) provides that "The low-income residential demand-side management and education programs shall be implemented through the low-income weatherization and fuel assistance program network and shall be coordinated with all gas distribution companies in the commonwealth with the objective of standardizing implementation." MASSCAP is the organization of community action programs that make up most of the low-income weatherization and fuel assistance program network. Members of MASSCAP implement the Company's low-income demand-side management (DSM) programs, including education; they also process applications for fuel assistance (LIHEAP) and other assistance for Company customers.

Members of MASSCAP counsel customers of the Company about rates and payment options, and arrange rate payment assistance (including LIHEAP and other forms of assistance) for Company customers. Many of the Company's customers, especially the low-income customers served by members of MASSCAP, are currently having an especially difficult time paying their bills due to the significant increases in the past year in the price, price volatility, and volume requirements, of the natural gas commodity delivered by the Company.

Petitioners are thus substantially affected by the level of the Company's rates because (a) their clients (or clients of their members) are more likely to require assistance as rates and price volatility rise, (b) the efficiency, weatherization, education, counseling and payment assistance services they (or their members) offer are less likely to result in affordable utility bills for their clients as rates and volatility rise, (c) they (or their members) will be increasingly called upon to secure other means of assistance with utility bills as rates and volatility rise, (d) they (or their members) will be increasingly called upon to assist clients who have had utility service terminated for non-payment as rates and volatility rise, and (e) they will be called upon by their members to assist them in helping members' clients as rates and volatility rise. Petitioners also represent the interest of their (or their members') clients in reasonable and stable rates that they can afford to manage and pay; clients are substantially affected by rates that they cannot afford to pay because they are unreasonably high or volatile.

The petitioners have questions about the price levels proposed in the above-captioned filing. Further, in petitioners' view, increases in base gas rates should be mitigated by gas purchasing portfolios that are managed to reduce price volatility as well as to reduce overall costs. The petitioners also have an interest in the On Track program proposed by the Company in this docket as a means of ameliorating the difficulties faced by its low-income customers.

If settlement is not attainable in this docket, petitioners expect to file oral and documentary evidence on the topics described above (particularly the need for reasonable and stable supply prices and means to achieve them), contending that the Company's petition is unreasonable under G.L. c. 164. Relief sought would include a means of controlling the volatility of the Company's supply prices in order to mediate any rate increase ordered in this docket.

Wherefore, the Massachusetts Community Action Program Directors Association Inc., including their member agencies, respectfully request that the Department grant intervenor status to these petitioners.

Respectfully submitted,

Massachusetts Community Action Program Directors Association Inc.

By

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